

CONSTITUTION and CANONS

**Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic
of the Reformed Episcopal Church**

(Adopted by the 125th Council of
the Diocese on November 3, 2005)

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - *Name*

The name of this Diocese is *The Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic of the Reformed Episcopal Church*. This Diocese is incorporated as the New York & Philadelphia Synod of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

ARTICLE II - *Mission*

The mission of the Diocese is to establish, support and maintain parishes, missions, and other related institutions and agencies of ministry, and to oversee and assist the service of lay ministry and Clergymen canonically resident in the Diocese to the glory of God.

ARTICLE III - The Diocese

Section 1. The Diocese, as a constituent part of the Reformed Episcopal Church, shall be bound by the authority of the Church's *Constitution and Canons*, the *Book of Common Prayer* as set forth at any time by the General Council and by the following unalterable historical documents that are part of the received Body of the Church's Doctrine:

1. The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion in their 1801 form.
2. The Declaration of Principles of 1873, as adopted by the first General Council of this Church.
3. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886-1888.

These historical documents are found appended to the *Constitution and Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. The Diocese shall consist of all organized Parishes, Mission Parishes and Extension Works and of all clergy of the Reformed Episcopal Church resident within the geographical boundaries of the Diocese as established by the General Council and its *Constitution and Canons*. The Parishes and Mission Parishes shall be represented at the Diocesan Council as the *Canons* of this Diocese direct.

ARTICLE IV - Government of the Diocese

Section 1. The legislation of the Diocese, and the direction of all matters which belong to and affect the Diocese, shall be vested in the Diocesan Council, subject to the restrictions of Article III, Section 1.

Section 2. The Ordinary, or Presiding Bishop of the Diocese, and Standing Committee of the Diocese shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. If there be no Ordinary, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority.

Section 3. All boards and committees of the Diocese shall be under the supervision of the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese; which authority shall have the power to regulate their operations and actions and if necessary, due to doctrinal, moral or legal error to temporarily suspend their activity within the limits of the *Constitution and Canons* of the Diocese.

Section 4. The Ordinary, and the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall be member(s) *ex officio* of all committees whether elective or appointive.

ARTICLE V - Membership of the Diocesan Council

Section 1. The Ordinary, the Bishop Coadjutor if there be one, Suffragan Bishop(s), and all Presbyters of the Diocese are members of the Diocesan Council. Deacons serving as Minister-in-charge of a Parish within the Diocese may, by a two-thirds vote, be elected by any Council to membership therein.

Section 2. The Second Vice-President, if he be a layman, the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, lay members of the Standing Committee, lay members of the Board of Trustees, and all lay Chairmen of committees and of other authorized agencies of the Diocese are members of the Diocesan Council.

Section 3. All lay delegates elected in accordance with the provisions of Title II, Canon IV, of the *Canons of the Diocese* are members of the Diocesan Council.

Section 4. No one shall be a member of the Diocesan Council who is not a communicant member of the Reformed Episcopal Church in good and regular standing.

Section 5. By a two-thirds vote, visitors and friends of the Reformed Episcopal Church may be seated as Corresponding Members for the duration of the meeting of any Council.

Corresponding membership shall confer the right to speak upon the floor of the house, but not to vote in its deliberations.

ARTICLE VI - Meetings of the Council

Section 1. The Diocesan Council shall convene its regular meeting on the first Thursday in November in each year, at such a place as shall have been selected at the next preceding meeting, unless such time or place of meeting, or both, shall have been changed in the manner set forth in Section 2 or Section 3 of this Article.

Section 2. In case there shall be any good cause rendering it advisable to change either, or both, the time or the place fixed for any meeting of the Diocesan Council, the Ordinary may do so, by and with the written consent of two-thirds of the members of the Standing Committee.

If such a change is made, thirty days notice thereof shall be given by the Ordinary to every Parish and Mission Parish entitled to representation in the Diocesan Council.

Section 3. The Ordinary may also call special meetings of the Diocesan Council, by and with the written consent of two-thirds of the members of the Standing Committee; and any such meetings shall be held at the time and place designated in the call to the meeting. Thirty days notice thereof shall be given by the Ordinary to every Parish and Mission Parish, entitled to representation, specifying the object or objects of such meeting.

Section 4. The Delegates elected to the next preceding Diocesan Council shall be delegates to any special meeting, unless in the interim, any Parish shall have elected other delegates.

Section 5. The Diocesan Council may, by a two-thirds vote, adopt a different date for the regular meetings of the Council.

ARTICLE VII - Officers of the Council

Section 1. The officers of the Diocesan Council shall be President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and such other officers as the Diocesan Council may decide upon from time to time. The officers shall be elected by ballot at each regular meeting of the Diocesan Council, and shall hold their

respective offices until their successors have been elected and have qualified.

Section 2. The Ordinary and the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall be ex officio President and First Vice-President, respectively, of the Council.

Section 3. If there be no Bishop Coadjutor, the First Vice-President of the Council shall be elected from among the Bishops or Presbyters of the Diocese.

Section 4. The several officers described in Section 1 shall perform the duties which usually pertain to their offices and such other duties as may be assigned to them by the Diocesan Council.

Section 5. In the event of the resignation, removal, or death of the Ordinary, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall immediately succeed to the office. In the event of the inability of the President to act during a session of the Council, or between sessions, the First Vice-President shall discharge his duties while such inability continues and the Second Vice-President shall discharge the duties of the First Vice-President.

Section 6. In the case of the death or disability or resignation of the First Vice-President, the Second Vice-President, the Secretary, or the Assistant Secretary, the President, in concurrence with a majority of the Standing Committee, shall forthwith appoint a suitable person to fill the office and execute the duties thereof, until the next regular meeting of the Diocesan Council.

Section 7. The Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Diocese shall be the Treasurer of the Diocesan Council.

ARTICLE VIII - Proceedings of the Council of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic

Section 1. The proceedings at the meetings of the Diocesan Council shall be regulated by such parliamentary rules as the Council may from time to time adopt; provided, however, that whenever ten or more members of the Council call for a vote by orders, it shall be allowed. In such case the Bishops shall vote as Presbyters, and the concurrence of both orders shall be necessary to the passage of the measure so voted on.

Section 2. In all business of the Council, freedom of debate shall be allowed, subject to the Council to fix and limit the length of time for debate.

Section 3. Six Presbyters and twelve lay delegates, representing a minimum of four Parishes or Mission Parishes, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but any number may adjourn from day to day to await the arrival of a quorum.

Section 4. In the deliberations of the Council a call for prayer shall always be deemed in order.

ARTICLE IX - Boards and Committees

Section 1. The following Committees and Boards shall be elected annually:

(1). A Standing Committee, consisting of three Presbyters and three laymen.

(2). A Board of Trustees of the Diocese consisting of not less than five and not more than twenty-five members, as provided in the charter of the New York and Philadelphia Synod, herein referred to as the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

(3). A Board of Directors for the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Episcopal Church, consisting of nine to twelve members, in accordance with the revised Charter of said institution.

(4). A Committee on Parochial Apportionments, consisting of five members, which shall receive from the Trustees of the Diocese the budgetary requirements for funding diocesan ministries and agencies, and shall establish the apportionment required from each parish for the support of the work of the Diocese.

Section 2. The following Committees, and any others which have been or shall be ordered by the Diocesan Council, shall be appointed annually by the President:

(1). A Committee on Constitution and Canons, consisting of three members, to which shall be referred all alterations of, or additions to, the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, and questions of a constitutional nature arising on the floor of the House on which the Diocesan Council may desire a report.

(2). A Committee on Memorials, consisting of three mem-
bers, which shall memorialize those who have been prominent
in the life and work of the Diocese (as in distinction from those
who have contributed espe-cially to the well-being of the local
parish) and who have gone to be with their Lord since the last
preceding regular Diocesan Council.

(3). A Committee on the Bassinger Home Fund for
Aged
and Dis-abled Clergymen, consisting of five members, which
shall foster the inter-ests of the clergy of this Diocese against
the needs brought on by infirmity, age and death. They shall
study the needs and recommend appropriations from funds
designated for this purpose. To this Committee may be
referred all matters pertaining to the protection of our clergy by
means of insurance or annuity, or both.
They shall have power to promote such plans as the Diocesan
Council may direct.

(4). A Committee on the State of the Diocese,
consisting
of three members, which shall compile statistics, covering all
the parishes in the Diocese, showing church membership and
how it has increased or decreased; Sunday School membership
and personnel; bap-tisms; mar-riages; funerals; expenditures for
current expenses, Sunday School work and benevolence; and
the value of church assets and property including all cash, real
property and investments. The Committee shall evaluate the
statistics and call attention to the state of the Diocese's work as
indicated thereby.

(5). An Official Auditor, or an Auditing Committee
of
three mem-bers, if authorized by any meeting of the Diocesan
Council, who shall examine the accounts and investments of all
Diocesan Funds, and whose cer-tificate of audit shall be
attached to the reports of all Treasurers.

(6). A Committee on Credentials, consisting of three
members, which shall examine the certificates of lay delegates
to the Diocesan Council; which shall report any irregularities in
the certificates; and which shall en-force Title II, Canon IV of
the *Canons* of this Diocese.

(7). A Committee on Young People's Work, consisting
of ten mem-bers, which shall serve as a link between the
Christian activities of the young people and the Diocesan
Council. It shall seek to foster the faith of the young people
and their intelligent interest in

the work and witness of their parish and of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

(8). A Committee on Christian Education, consisting of five members, which shall study and recommend methods, materials, and plans for the effective training of our people in the knowledge of Christ and of the Scriptures, of the Christian life, and of the principles, doctrine and worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

(9). A Committee on Nominations, consisting of seven members, which shall meet before the next ensuing regular Diocesan Council, and prepare its list of nominees for the officers of the Council and for all elective Committees. The Committee shall canvass by mail, at least sixty days in advance of the meetings of the Council, the rectors and vestries of the Diocese for their suggestions for personnel of elective boards and committees. Copies of the Nominating Committee's report shall be distributed early on the first day of the Council.

(10). A Committee on Program and Resolutions, consisting of three members, which in consultation with the Ordinary, shall plan the schedule and program for the various sessions of the Diocesan Council; and which shall be responsible for all courtesy motions; and to which the House may refer any other resolutions for consideration and report.

(11). A Committee on Evangelism, Church Growth and Development consisting of seven (or eight if there be a Bishop Co-Adjutor) members. The Ordinary, Bishop Co-Adjutor, and the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Diocese shall be members *ex officio*. The remaining five members shall be appointed from the membership of the Standing Committee and/or the Diocesan trustees. The duties of the Committee shall be to determine, or assist local parishes in determining, the sites of new Churches and to request the Trustees of the Diocese to provide such funds as shall be necessary for the establishment of those new Churches. This Committee shall have power to make recommendations to the Diocesan Trustees regarding financial aid to Churches. The Committee shall furthermore seek to promote the evangelistic and missionary interest and activity of the parishes, the up building of our people in the Christian faith and life, and, in conjunction with the Ordinary,

other Bishops and the Theological Seminary, the training of clergy; to the end that the lost may be saved, believers strengthened, and the Church of Christ advanced.

(12). A Committee on Public Relations, consisting of five members, which shall endeavor to publicize by various news media all events and matters of interest occurring in the Diocese and its Parishes.

Section 3. The first named member of any Committee shall be the Chairman. The Committees appointed at any Council shall report in writing to the next succeeding Council.

Section 4. A Board of Examining Chaplains shall be annually appointed by the Ordinary at Council according to Title I, Canon 4 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church. It shall be the duty of this Board, consisting of three learned Presbyters canonically resident within the Diocese, and under the guidance and oversight of the Bishop, to conduct the examinations of Postulants prescribed by the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

ARTICLE X - Election of Bishops

In the event the office of the Ordinary becomes vacant for any reason, any regular meeting of the Diocesan Council, or a special meeting called for that purpose, may elect an Ordinary. When, in the judgment of the Ordinary and the Standing Committee, the condition of the Diocese shall require a Bishop Co-Adjutor, an election may be held at the next scheduled Council or at a Council canonically convened for that purpose. Likewise, any number of Suffragan Bishops judged necessary by the Ordinary and the Standing Committee may be elected by the Council. Such elections shall be by the concurrent vote, by ballot, of both orders, clerical and lay, and shall in every respect follow the procedure for the election of Bishops as set forth in the *Constitution and Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

If a vacancy occurs in the office of Ordinary, the Presiding Bishop, or his designee, will serve as bishop for the Diocese until the Diocesan Council elects a successor.

ARTICLE XI - Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by a unanimous vote of any stated meeting of the Council, or of any special meeting thereof

called for the purpose; otherwise, by a two-thirds vote at one stated meeting of the Council, ratified by a two-thirds vote at the next succeeding stated meeting thereof. A motion to adopt for the first reading, even though passed unanimously when made, shall not constitute final passage but shall require ratification at the next stated meeting of the Council. If it is intended to have an amendment passed without a second reading, it shall be stated so when it is offered or proposed.

CANONS

TITLE I - THE DIOCESE OF THE NORTHEAST AND MID-ATLANTIC

CANON I - The Clergy

Section 1. Annually before the meeting of the Diocesan Council, the Ordinary, or if there be none, the Standing Committee, shall prepare or cause to be prepared, a Roll of all clergy canonically resident in this Diocese, with the names of their respective charges, together with their places of domicile; and also, with particulars of time and place, the names of all Clergymen who have been ordained or received by Letter Dimissory, have resigned or died or have been removed from the active list, or have been subject to discipline. Such Roll shall be laid before the Council immediately after it shall have been called to order and the names of the clerical members called therefrom. This Roll shall be published in the *Minutes*, and the Secretary of the Diocese shall send a copy of the same to the Secretary of the General Council.

Section 2. **Non-parochial Clergy**

(A). It shall be the duty of every Clergyman in the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, except he be retired because of age or disability, who is not in charge of a Parish or otherwise engaged in the service of the Diocese to make an annual report, in writing, to the Ordinary, no less than sixty days prior to the convening of the annual Diocesan Council, or if there be no Ordinary to the Standing Committee, showing cause why he should remain on the active Roll of the clergy of the Diocese. This report is to include his place of domicile, the occupation in which he is engaged and the ministry in which he is involved. Any clergyman who fails so to report, or whose proposed reasons for retaining active status are deemed insufficient by the Ordinary and Standing Committee, shall be removed from the list of active clergy to the inactive list, and shall forfeit his seat and vote in the Diocesan Council. Any clergyman so removed from the list of active clergy may be restored by (a) being made in charge of a Parish or otherwise becoming engaged in ministry in a Parish, or in the service of the Diocese, or (b) by laying before the Ordinary and Standing Committee in writing reasons which they deem sufficient why he should be restored including a satisfactory explanation for any previous failure to report. In every case, the decision of the

Ordinary and Standing Committee shall be handed down in writing.

(B). All clergy on the active roll, not in charge, or assisting in the work of a Parish or otherwise engaged in the service of the Diocese or in a church in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church, are required to send one-half of their tithe to the Diocesan Treasurer for deposit into the Diocesan treasury.

Section 3. Titles of Clergy and those serving

(A). A Presbyter in charge of a Parish shall be designated the Rector or Pastor thereof.

(B). Other clergy, serving on the pastoral staff of a parish under the care of a Rector, shall be designated as Associate Rector, Assistant to the Rector, or Curate thereof, as determined by the nature of their call and ministerial function.

(C). A clergyman in charge of a Mission Parish or an Extension Work, by appointment of the Bishop and Standing Committee, shall be designated the Vicar thereof.

(D). A Deacon in charge of a Parish, by appointment of the Ordinary and Standing Committee, shall be designated the Minister-in-charge thereof.

(E). A Lay Reader may be licensed by the Bishop to conduct Divine Worship in a Parish or Mission without pastoral care, in accordance with Title I, Canon 24 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church; with the stipulation that such licensure be limited to those who are communicants of this church, and who submit the same credentials required of Postulants, as required by the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

CANON II - The Secretary & Assistant Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to notify all Parishes and Mission Parishes in the Diocese at least thirty days in advance of the time and place of all meetings of the Council, to take the *Minutes* and record all proceedings of the Diocesan Council, and together with the President, to attest its official acts. The Secretary shall direct the printing and distribution of carefully indexed copies of the *Minutes of the Diocesan Council of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic* and shall preserve in the archives of the Diocese at least twenty (20) copies thereof.

Before printing, the *Minutes* shall be examined by, and shall have the approval of the Ordinary or, in his absence, of someone designated by the Standing Committee.

The Assistant Secretary shall assist the Secretary in fulfilling these responsibilities.

CANON III - **The Treasurers**

It shall be the duty of all Treasurers, acting under the supervision of the Diocesan Council, to receive the monies belonging to their respective funds and to distribute the same under the direction of the Council of the Diocese and/or of the agencies, boards or committees under which they serve. Their accounts shall be audited, the certificate of which shall be printed with the reports, printed copies of which shall be distributed to each member of the Council at its first session. The fiscal year shall begin with the first day of October and close with the last day of September.

CANON IV - **The Standing Committee**

Section 1. The Standing Committee shall be the Advisory Board to the Ordinary in the oversight and administration of the work of the Diocese, and shall have such powers and perform such duties as are provided by the *Constitutions and Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and of the Diocese. The Standing Committee shall also discharge such other duties as may be assigned to it from time to time by the Diocesan Council.

Section 2. The Ordinary of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic is a member *ex officio* of this Committee. The Committee shall elect the Ordinary as President. The Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall be the Vice-President of this Committee, *ex officio*. The Archdeacon of the Diocese, if there be one and the Canon to the Ordinary, if there be one, are members *ex officio* of this Committee. The Committee shall also elect from its members a Secretary who shall keep the *Minutes* of its meetings, and perform such other clerical duties as the Committee may direct.

Section 3. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. The Committee shall make a report of its proceedings to each annual Diocesan Council, and to each General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

CANON V - *The Board of Trustees of the Diocese*

Section 1. The duties of the Trustees of the Diocese shall be such as are defined by these Constitution and Canons, and as may be assigned from time to time by the Diocesan Council. The Board of Trustees shall hold, control and care for all funds and property of the Diocese. It shall also be the duty of the Trustees of the Diocese to receive and hold for the Diocese the equity in any and all property and funds, whether real or personal, that may be left by virtue of the closing or disbanding of any Parish, or of any society or group connected with such Parish, which has been meeting under the name of the Reformed Episcopal Church, where no prior provision has been made for the disposition of said property and funds. Nothing herein shall be construed, however, to affect any property that rightly belongs to the General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. The Ordinary shall be Chairman ex officio of the Board of Trustees. The Trustees shall elect other officers from their own number; and both the Secretary and Treasurer shall report annually to the Diocesan Council the entire proceedings of said board.

Section 3. The Diocesan Council shall have the power to prescribe and regulate the acts and proceedings of said Trustees in all matters not regulated by statute.

Section 4. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum.

CANON VI - *The Administrative Committee*

There shall also be an Administrative Committee, consisting of the Officers of the Council, all Treasurers elected by the Council, the Standing Committee, the Committee on Parochial Apportionments, and the Trustees of the Diocese, which shall meet at the call of the Ordinary and Standing Committee to transact urgent business not deemed grave enough to demand a special meeting of the Council; which also, by a two-thirds vote of any Council, shall act as that Council in continuum, for the transaction of specific items referred to it. It shall report all its acts to the next succeeding Council.

TITLE II - OF PARISHES

CANON I - Of Membership

In accordance with Title IV, Canon 48, of the *Canons* of The Reformed Episcopal Church, the consent of the Ordinary and Standing Committee of the Diocese shall be prerequisite to the formation or reception of any Extension Work, Mission Parish or new Parish within the geographic boundaries of the Diocese.

CANON II - *Of Parishes, Mission Parishes, and Extension Works*

Section 1. Extension Works

(A.) According to Title IV, Canon 48, Section 9 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church, the initial stage of organization of a new Parish, prior to the gathering of twelve (12) adult adherents, shall be known as an *Extension Work* of the Diocese. At this stage, an Extension Work is understood to be working toward organization and eventual recognition as a Mission Parish, and should, subject to the approval of the Ordinary, elect officers, and hold meetings for the purpose of promoting the work of the church. Regular worship services should either be already in process or shortly anticipated. With the permission of the Ordinary, and in consultation with the Standing Committee, the congregation may use the name "*Reformed Episcopal*", under the auspices of the Committee for Church Growth, Evangelism and Development and with the direct supervision of the Bishop. It is understood that the Extension Work is being organized for the purpose of maintaining the worship of God and the preaching of the Gospel according to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church and in conformity with the *Constitution and Canons* of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic and the Reformed Episcopal Church.

(B.) Should an Extension Work receive financial assistance from the Diocese, the pastor, wardens, vestry and people of the church must recognize that any funds received by the church are for the sole purpose of establishing a Reformed Episcopal Church. The pastor, wardens, vestry and people of the Extension Work, are obligated to work with the Bishop, and with the Committee on Evangelism, Church Growth and Development to implement recommended procedures for church growth, and to file such timely reports as may be requested. In the event the Extension Work should withdraw from the Reformed Episcopal Church, the pastor, wardens, vestry and members of the congregation are under obligation to repay to the Diocese all such funds as may have been disbursed for the support of the work.

(C.) Should the Extension Work fail, or be disbanded by action of the Ecclesiastical Authority, after all debts are paid, and the investment of a sponsoring local parish repaid, all remaining property purchased in the name of the church, and all residual funds shall revert to the ownership of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

(D.) Extension Works are required to contribute 5% of gross monthly revenues (excluding school revenues and designated building funds) to the Diocesan Budget. An additional 5% of gross revenues must be set aside to establish a Building Fund.

(E.) Extension Works may elect one (1) lay representative to the Diocesan Council. That representative will be a Corresponding Member of the Council. Said representative shall be accorded the right to speak upon the floor of the House, but not to vote in its deliberations. Extension works that fail to fulfill their financial obligations to the Diocese forfeit rights to representation at Diocesan Council and may also lose financial assistance.

Section 2. Mission Parishes.

(A.) An Extension Work, having gathered to itself at least twelve (12) persons of legal voting age, who intend to be supporters of the congregation, and who have been duly examined by the Ordinary, or by a Bishop or Presbyterian of his appointment, as to their personal faith, as attested by prior church membership, or by Confirmation by a Bishop, may make application to be received as a Mission Parish by signing and submitting to the Ordinary and Standing Committee the following Article of Association and Conformity according to Title IV, Canon 48, Section 7 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church: to wit,

"We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves for the purpose of maintaining the worship of God and the preaching of the Gospel according to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church, under the name of _____ Church, of the city (or town) of _____, in the State of _____, and we promise conformity to the *Constitution and Canons* of The Reformed Episcopal Church, and of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

"We do hereby authorize the Chairman and Secretary of this meeting to certify this action, in writing, to both the Bishop, and to the Standing Committee of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic."

Upon acceptance of the Article of Association and Conformity by the Ordinary and Standing Committee, the Extension Work shall be formally recognized as a Mission Parish of the Diocese.

(B.) For a minimum of six (6) months, and thereafter, for so long a time as the number of adult members of legal voting age of a congregation is between twelve (12) and twenty-nine (29) persons, such Parish shall continue a Mission Parish. A Mission Parish shall be under the sole government of the Ordinary or of a Bishop or Presbyter appointed by him, who shall appoint or remove Wardens, Vestrymen and other officers, and who shall admit and dismiss members according to Title IV, Canon 48, Section 8 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

(C.) Should a Mission Parish receive financial assistance from the Diocese, the pastor, wardens, vestry and people of the church must recognize that any funds received by the church are for the sole purpose of establishing a Reformed Episcopal Church. The pastor, wardens, vestry and people of the Mission Parish, are therefore to work with the Bishop, and with the Committee on Evangelism, Church Growth and Development to implement recommended procedures for church growth, and to file such timely reports as may be requested. In the event the Mission Parish (at whatever stage of development) should withdraw from the Reformed Episcopal Church, the pastor, wardens, vestry and members of the congregation are under obligation to repay to the Diocese and any sponsoring parish all funds as may have been disbursed for the support of the work.

(D.) Should the Mission Parish fail, or be disbanded by action of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Bishop shall appoint a custodian who shall oversee the disposition of debts and assets. After all debts are paid, and the investment of a sponsoring local parish repaid, all remaining property purchased in the name of the church, and all residual funds, shall revert to the ownership of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

(E.) Mission Parishes are required to contribute 5% of gross monthly revenues (excluding school revenues and designated building funds) to the Diocesan Budget. An additional 5% of gross revenues must be set aside to establish a Building Fund which may be used toward the purchase of a building or the maintenance of a property already owned.

(F.) Mission Parishes are entitled to elect one lay delegate and one lay alternate to attend the Diocesan Council. The duly elected representative shall have full membership privileges. Mission Parishes that fail to fulfill their financial obligations to the Diocese forfeit the right to vote at Diocesan Council, and may also lose financial assistance. Further, until such time as their financial obligations are satisfied, a Mission Parish may not be considered for advancement to Parish status.

Section 3. Parishes.

(A.) A Mission Parish, having fulfilled its six (6) month waiting period, having satisfied its financial obligations to the Diocese, and having in excess of 29 adult communicant members of legal voting age, may petition the Standing Committee in writing for reception as a Parish. The Ordinary and Standing Committee shall provide notification of their action in writing.

(B.) Consequent to reception by the Ordinary and Standing Committee, the Parish is obligated to support the Diocese according to the established formula applied to all parishes holding membership in the Diocese. Parishes that fail to fulfill their financial obligations to the Diocese, by the end of the fiscal year, forfeit the right of one half of their delegates to vote at Diocesan Council.

(C.) Should a Parish receive or have received financial assistance at any time from the Diocese, the pastor, wardens, vestry and people of the church must recognize that any funds received by the church are for the sole purpose of promoting the work of a Reformed Episcopal Church. The pastor, wardens, vestry and people of the Parish, are therefore to work with the Ordinary and any Bishop or Presbyter appointed by him, and with the Committee on Evangelism, Church Growth and Development to implement recommended procedures for church growth, and to file such timely reports as may be requested. In the event the Parish (at whatever stage of development) should withdraw from the Reformed Episcopal Church, the pastor, wardens, vestry and members of the congregation are under obligation to repay to the Diocese all funds disbursed for the support of the work.

Section 4. A congregation or Parish of another church, which may desire to be received into union with the Reformed Episcopal Church, and with the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, may be received by the Ordinary and Standing Committee upon presentation to them of the Article of Association and Conformity according to Title IV, Canon 48, Section 7 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church; appropriately certified as the act of a duly constituted congregational or Parish Meeting, attested by the Secretary thereof.

Section 5.

(A). In the event that the communicant membership of a Parish falls below the number of thirty (30) for two consecutive years, that Parish will be given the status of a Mission Parish with the relief and assistance to which Mission Parishes are subject under the *Canons of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic*, and subject to the limitations of the same. Should the Mission Parish again attain the membership of thirty (30) or more, it shall follow the procedures stipulated in Title II Canon II Section 3 (A.) for reception as a Parish as prescribed in Title IV, Canon 48, Section 10(a) of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

(B). In the event that the communicant membership of a Parish or Mission Parish falls below the number of twelve (12) for two or more consecutive years, that Parish or Mission Parish may be disbanded by the Ordinary with the approval of the Standing Committee as prescribed in Title IV, Canon 48, Section 10(b) of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church. The members thereof shall be assigned to the pastoral care of a neighboring Reformed Episcopal Parish or Mission Parish. If no Reformed Episcopal congregation exists in the vicinity of the disbanded Parish or Mission Parish, an effort will be made to direct the remaining constituents to a church compatible with the doctrine and worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church. Once all existing debts have been satisfied, all residual funds and assets shall become the property of the Trustees of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

Section 6. The consent of the Ordinary and Standing Committee shall be prerequisite to the merger of Parishes consisting of two or more congregations. In matters of representation, rights, and limitations enumerated in these *Canons*, the status of such Parishes formed through merger shall be determined by their total combined communicant membership.

Section 7. All Extension Works, Mission Parishes or Parishes affiliating with this Diocese must have the name of their Parish approved by the Ordinary and Standing Committee according to Title, IV, Canon 48, Sections 5,6 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

CANON III - Of Parish By-Laws

The By-Laws of any Parish must not conflict with the *Constitution and Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or those of this Diocese; and must be submitted to the Committee on Constitution and Canons for correction, if need be, and for certification. Likewise all proposed revisions of By-Laws of Parishes shall be so submitted. The Committee on Constitution and Canons will then make recommendation for approval to the Bishop and Standing Committee for certification.

The model Constitution and By-Laws for a local parish, approved at any time by the Bishop and Standing Committee of this Diocese, shall serve as a guide to any Parish formulating its By-Laws.

Parish By-Laws must be approved by at least a two-thirds vote of the congregation.

CANON IV - *Of Lay Delegates*

Section 1. In each Parish, at the annual election, as provided in Title IV, Canon 48, Section 11 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church, there shall be chosen, in addition to the officers therein named, two delegates, with two alternates, to the Diocesan Council when a church has less than 100 communicants; four delegates, with four alternates, when the communicants number from 100 to 249; six delegates, with six alternates, when the communicants number from 250 to 399; eight delegates, with eight alternates, when the church has 400 communicants or more. Delegates and alternates must be communicants of the Church, of the age of twenty-one years or over. In the event of the violation of this Canon by any Parish, the Committee on Credentials shall reduce the representation of such Parish to the basis herein provided.

Section 2. Mission Parishes are entitled to one Delegate and one Alternate, from among the adult communicant members of the age of twenty-one years or over.

Section 3. Extension Works may send one elected representative who shall be a Corresponding Member.

Section 4. No Candidate for Holy Orders shall be eligible as a lay delegate to a Diocesan Council.

CANON V - Of Vacant Parishes

Section 1. Whenever a Parish becomes vacant (without a regularly employed clergyman), it shall be the duty of the Wardens or the Secretary of the Vestry forthwith to notify the Ordinary.

Section 2. The Ordinary is ex officio Rector of every vacant Parish until a Rector is elected and installed. The Ordinary, or a Bishop or Presbyter whom he appoints as his representative, shall be ex officio chairman of the Vestry, and shall preside at any Parish Meeting. The Senior Warden shall preside if neither the Ordinary or his representative are able to attend, provided he is so directed and authorized by the Ordinary.

Section 3. During the vacancy it shall be the duty of the Vestry, under the direction of the Bishop, to make provision for maintaining Divine Worship in the Church, and for the pastoral care of the Parish.

Section 4. The process of organizing a Search Committee, and of directing its function, shall be under the authority of the Bishop, in consultation with the Wardens of the Parish.

CANON VI - Of Parish Registers

Section 1. In every Parish or Mission Parish, the Vestry shall provide a suitable book to become a Parish Register. It shall be in the custody of the Clergyman, whose duty it shall be to keep accurate and full records therein of all baptisms, confirmations, receptions by letter from other Churches, marriages, and burials, together with a complete list of all the communicants and a list, so far as practicable, of families within his charge, which Register shall be the property of the Parish, and shall be preserved for the use of his successor. No names, once entered shall ever be erased; changes of status being entered as notes or remarks.

Section 2. Communicants of a Parish are all persons who are

received according to Title II, Canon 35 of the Canons of the Church.

Section 3. The Communicant list shall be corrected annually by the Parish Council by removing from active membership, through notation, the names of all persons who have died or have been ordained to the presbyterate, or dismissed to another church, or ex-communicated, together with those who for a period of one year have not partaken of the Lord's Supper, or disappeared, or ceased to attend Divine Services, or to contribute to the support of the Parish; provided, that all reasonable efforts to reclaim such members have been made.

Exceptions may be made of non-residents who continue to contribute and wish to retain their active standing, and of aged persons invalids and persons who are financially unable to contribute, and of those in military service or in educational institutions which require a change of residence.

All who are placed upon the inactive list shall be so notified, if their addresses are known. In preparing statistical reports of Communicant Members, only those on the active list shall be enumerated.

Section 4. A Communicant moving from one parish to any other shall request and be granted a letter dimissory, which shall give his or her status as shown by the Parish Register. A Communicant, listed as inactive, who has resumed regular attendance at Divine Services, renewed his or her support, and partaken of the Lord's Supper, shall be restored at any time to the active roll from the inactive roll.

Section 5. Upon the death, retirement, or removal of the Clergyman, the Parish Register shall pass to the Senior Warden, who shall keep the records, entering every change without delay, while the Parish is vacant.

Section 6. All Parish records shall be open to the Bishop, and it shall be his duty to examine them regularly, or to appoint a person or persons to act in his stead.

Section 7. Upon the dissolution of a Parish, the Parish Register shall become the property of the Diocese, to be preserved in the archives.

CANON VII - Of The Annual Parish Meeting

Section 1. In each Parish annually during Easter Week or on some other convenient occasion, an election shall be held for Wardens, Vestrymen, the Parish Council, and Delegates and Alternates to the Diocesan Council. Wardens shall be chosen from among the Communicants of the age of twenty-five years or over. Vestrymen, the Parish Council, and Delegates and Alternates shall be chosen from among the Communicants of the age of twenty-one years or over. Unless otherwise stipulated in the Parish Charter or By-laws, one-third of the entire number of Vestrymen shall be elected for a three-year period each.

Section 2. A Parish or Congregation consists of all persons enrolled as active Communicant members, who have been thus connected with the Parish for twelve (12) months preceding. Only Communicants of legal voting age shall be entitled to vote at the Parish Meeting. In any case of dispute as to the qualification of the electors, the decision shall rest with the Wardens.

Section 3. At the annual Parish Meeting, a written report shall be made by the Rector, providing a synopsis of his official labors, a detailed accounting of entries made in the Parish Register, and an evaluation of the spiritual condition of the Parish. Reports shall also be presented on behalf of all other auxiliaries, boards, committees, schools, agencies, and departments of work and service in connection with the Parish. The Treasurer of the Parish and the Treasurers of all Parish organizations, shall together with their itemized reports, present receipts and vouchers. Such Treasurers' reports shall be audited, with the report of the auditor presented to the Parish Meeting.

Section 4. Every Parish Meeting, whether stated or special, must be announced at each church service on two Sundays preceding its date. The purpose for each special meeting shall be announced in its call, and this business and none other, shall be considered in such a special meeting.

TITLE III - OF PASTORAL CONNECTIONS

CANON I - The Call of a Clergyman to a Parish

Section 1. Unless otherwise provided by the Charter or By-Laws of the Parish, or ordered by the Parish at a stated meeting, the Vestry shall take initial and final action in the calling of a Rector.

Section 2. Unless otherwise provided by the Charter or By-Laws of the Parish, or ordered by the Parish at a stated meeting, the Vestry, with the concurrence of the Rector, shall take initial and final action in the calling of any other clergy to serve on the pastoral staff of the Parish.

Section 3. The advice and consent of the Ordinary and Standing Committee, or of the Standing Committee alone if there be no Ordinary, shall be required before a call may be issued by any Parish.

Section 4. The Call of a Clergyman shall be in the following form, and no other: to wit,

" _____ Reformed Episcopal Church, of _____, being fully satisfied with your ministerial qualifications, and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose ministry will be profitable to the spiritual life of our Church and fruitful to the Kingdom of the Lord, solemnly calls you _____ to undertake the work as _____ of this Parish, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement and obedience in the Lord. That you may devote yourself to the Ministry of the Word among us, we obligate ourselves to pay you the sum of \$ _____ a year in regular (weekly/monthly) payments, and will pay the church's portion into the Clergyman's Retirement Fund on the basis determined by the General Council, during the time of your being and continuing in the pastoral relationship set forth in this Call to this Parish."

(NOTE: Insert below other terms, including such matters as rectory, utilities, annual leave for recreation and rest, expense allowances, moving costs, car allowance, etc. It is suggested that where there is a cash allowance made for the rectory that the rectory allowance be designated in a cash amount. Other such cash amounts such as automobile expense reimbursement, etc., should be designated separately so as to not be confused with salary.)

The following should also appear at the end of the document:

"We agree that the Vestry of this Parish will annually review the above remunerations with a view to necessary adjustments.

At least _____ days' notice shall be required for the termination of this pastoral connection by either party.

In testimony whereof we have respectively subscribed our names this _____ day of _____, A.D. _____.

Attest:
Senior Warden _____

Junior Warden _____

Secretary _____

Approved by action of the Bishop and the Standing Committee of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

_____ Bishop

_____ Secretary of the Standing
Committee

Acceptance this _____ day of _____, A.D. _____ by

_____ "

After final approval and acceptance, a copy of the above is to be given to each of the following:

1. The Clergyman receiving the Call.
2. The Diocesan Bishop.
3. The Secretary of the Standing Committee.
4. The Secretary of the Parish extending the call.

Section 5. Unless otherwise provided in the By-Laws of a Parish, a call shall be for an indefinite period of time, but in no case for less than a period of one year.

Section 6. No Presbyter shall be settled as Rector or Pastor of a Parish of this Diocese unless he be duly installed according to the Order provided in the *Book of Common Prayer* by the Ordinary, or by a Presbyter he appoints to act in his stead.

Section 7. The Ordinary and Standing Committee shall appoint the Vicar of a Mission Parish, or of an Extension Work. A Presbyter shall have the right to accept or reject such an appointment without prejudice. A Deacon may be required to accept such an appointment and serve diligently at the pleasure of the Ordinary.

Section 8. The Ordinary and Standing Committee may appoint a Deacon to serve as Minister-in-charge of any Parish without pastoral care. A Deacon serving as Minister-in-charge shall be under the sole authority and direction of the Ordinary and Standing Committee in the exercise of all of his ministerial functions.

Section 9. The Ordinary and Standing Committee may appoint an Interim Rector, to provide pastoral care for any

Parish involved in a search process to fill a pulpit vacancy. No clergyman appointed to serve as Interim Rector may be considered a candidate for the rectorship of that Parish.

Section 10. The salary and other remuneration necessary for the support of any Vicar, Minister-in-charge, or Interim Rector appointed by the Ordinary and Standing Committee shall be set by the Vestry of the Parish, Mission Parish, or Extension Work, in consultation with the Ordinary and Standing Committee.

CANON II - Termination of a Pastoral Connection

With the exception of a Vicar, or of a Deacon, whose ministerial connection can be severed only by the Ordinary in consultation with the Standing Committee, a pastoral connection in this church may at any time be terminated by the consent of both parties; or, after not less than thirty, nor more than ninety days, by the decision of the Ordinary and Standing Committee, on the appeal by one party, after giving due notice to the other party. The Ordinary and Standing Committee shall have the authority to dissolve any pastoral connection on their own initiative after not less than thirty and nor more than ninety days, after giving due notice to both parties, if viewed necessary and in the interest of the Church, but only after an open examination into the reasons for such dissolution. In the event that either party refuses to abide by the decision rendered in either of these cases, such party shall forfeit the right, if a Presbyter, of a seat and a vote in the General Council and in the council of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic or if Wardens or Vestrymen, of having their Parishes represented in the same. No Clergyman shall be approved for a pastoral relationship in a Reformed Episcopal Church, nor shall any Parish have its pastoral call approved, while refusing to abide by a decision of the Ecclesiastical Authority made under this section. In any case, the party or parties shall in other respects, be amenable to the Ecclesiastical Authority, as if these forfeitures of seats, representation and approvals, had not been incurred; providing that either party shall have the right of appeal to the final decision of the next ensuing General Council.

TITLE IV - OF WORK AND WORSHIP

CANON I - Of Clergyman and Their Duties

Section 1. It shall be the duty of every Clergyman in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish of this Diocese to preach

the Gospel and to declare the whole counsel of God according to the Holy Scriptures; to appoint and conduct regular services for Divine Worship; to visit the members of his congregation, particularly such as are sick, infirm or aged; to prepare candidates for Baptism, and Confirmation; to conduct the funeral services of deceased communicant members; and in every way to seek to strengthen the spiritual life of members of the Parish or Mission Parish, to promote the work of the Diocese, and to advance the Kingdom of Christ through the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of every clergyman in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish to give due notice to his congregation of an Episcopal visitation according to Title I, Canon 19, Section 2(c) of the Canons of the Church, and to present such persons as are ready and desirous to be confirmed, with a list of their names, after having ascertained the fact of their baptism, to the Bishop making such visitation.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of every Clergyman in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish, with such assistance as he may see fit, to obtain from persons skilled in music, to give order concerning the tunes to be sung at any time in his church; and especially it shall be his duty to suppress all light and unseemly music, and all indecency and irreverence in the performance, by which vain and ungodly persons profane the service of the Sanctuary.

Section 4. No minister of this Church shall officiate, either by preaching, reading prayers in public worship, or by performing any other Presbyterian or Ministerial function without a license issued by the Ordinary or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which he is canonically resident. No minister of a Church, not in communion with this church, shall function without the permission of the Ordinary or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which he is to function or minister.

CANON II - Of the Wardens and Vestry

Section 1. A Vestry shall consist of two Wardens: A Rector's Warden (or Senior Warden), and a People's Warden (or Junior Warden); and some number of Vestrymen. The term of office shall be determined by the Charter or By-Laws of the Parish or by the Parish at a stated meeting, subject to the *Constitutions and Canons* of this Diocese, and of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. The Rector or Pastor is ex officio Chairman of the Vestry. He shall preside at all meetings when present, and may vote to break a tie. In the absence of the Rector, the Senior Warden shall preside. In the absence of both the Rector and the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden shall preside. The Minister-in-Charge of a Parish and the Vicar of a Mission Parish may preside by the appointment of the Bishop, but he shall have no vote.

Section 3. The Rector's Warden shall be elected annually by ballot as provided in Title IV, Canon 48, Section 11 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church. Unless prohibited by the local Parish By-Laws, the Rector's Warden shall be nominated by the Rector. The Rector's Warden should be a person of outstanding Christian character. In the event of the incapacity or resignation of the Rector, the Rector's Warden, in consultation with the Bishop, shall make provision for the maintenance of all stated services of divine worship in the Parish, and shall see that the pulpit is supplied. The Rector's Warden shall be responsible to represent the needs of the Rector to the Vestry and people of the Parish. The Rector's Warden shall be the custodian of the Parish Register if there be no Rector or Minister-in-Charge.

Section 4. The Junior Warden (or People's Warden) shall be elected annually by ballot as provided in Title IV, Canon 48, Section 11 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church. The Junior Warden shall be responsible for the funds of the Parish unless a Treasurer is elected for this purpose. The Junior Warden should be a person of exemplary Christian character and, if he be the Treasurer, should demonstrate qualifications requisite to that stewardship.

Section 5. The Vestry shall meet as soon as practicable, after the annual election, and organize by electing a Secretary and Treasurer and other such Officers as may be necessary.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the Vestry to take charge of all properties of the Parish, to regulate all its temporal concerns; to act in calling a Rector and/or other clergy to serve on the pastoral staff, unless otherwise provided by the Charter and the By-Laws of the Parish; and to employ all other persons serving the Parish under salary and fix the amount of each salary. The Vestry may not buy or sell real estate of the Parish without the approval of the congregation at a parish meeting called for that purpose.

Section 7. The Wardens are members of the Vestry *ex officio*.

Section 8. The Vestry shall fill its own vacancies occurring during the year.

Section 9. It shall be the duty of the Wardens especially, to
provide the elements for the Lord's Supper, to oversee the care of the communion ware, and to provide suitable vestments for the minister or ministers.

CANON III - Of Lay Readers

Section 1. No one shall serve as Lay Reader in any Parish or Mission Parish in this Diocese without a license from the Bishop. Licensure shall be in accordance with the provisions of Title I, Canon 24 of the *Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church. But note that nothing in this canon shall be understood as prohibiting unlicensed lay persons from serving as Lectors at the discretion of the Rector.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the Lay Reader to assist the Rector in any and all of the services of the church, as he may desire and direct.

CANON IV - Of Order in Worship

In every event Article XI and Title III of the *Constitution and Canons* of the Reformed Episcopal Church shall be followed. In the conduct of the worship of this Church, where there is no Rubric or Canon, or where Rubrics or Canons may be open to varied interpretation, recourse shall be had to the Ordinary in case of doubt or dispute, and his decision shall be authoritative and binding.

TITLE V - AMENDMENTS

CANON I - *Procedure for Amendments*

These Canons may be amended by a unanimous vote of any stated meeting of the Council, or of any special meeting thereof called for the purpose; otherwise, by a two-thirds vote at one stated meeting of the Council, ratified by a two-thirds vote at

the next succeeding stated meeting thereof. A motion to adopt for the first reading, even though passed unanimously when made, shall not constitute final passage but shall require ratification at the next stated meeting of the Council. If it is intended to have an amendment passed without a second reading, it shall be stated so when it is offered or proposed.

CANON II - *Of Standing Resolutions*

Standing Resolutions, being of doubtful authority and enforcement, shall not be adopted in lieu of amendments of the *Constitutions and Canons*. When adopted, they shall stand only for the duration of the Council in which they were adopted, and until the convening of the next regular or special meeting of the Diocesan Council.

CANON III - *Of the Time of the New Constitution & Canons Taking Effect*

This *Constitution* and these *Canons*, upon adoption by first reading, by the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Council of the Diocese of the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic, shall take effect provisionally upon the close of that Council; and upon adoption by second reading at the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Council of the Diocese of the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic, shall take full effect on the First Sunday in Advent following the close of that Council; after which day all other *Constitutions* and *Canons* of this Diocese shall be deemed repealed. All amendments to this *Constitution* and these *Canons* thereafter enacted, unless otherwise specifically ordered, shall take effect upon the close of the Diocesan Council at which they were made.

Glossary of terms:

A number of terms used in these Canons may not be familiar to the casual reader. The following glossary is provided to assist understanding.

Archdeacon: a Presbyter with at least five years of service, who is appointed by the Ordinary to serve on his staff and is entrusted with special responsibilities usually involving supervision over parishes, mission parishes or programs.

Canon: a senior Presbyter appointed by the Ordinary to serve on his staff to perform such duties as the Bishop shall assign. There is only one Canon to the Ordinary, however, other canons, such as Canon Missioner, Canon Lawyer, Canon Theologian, Canon Advisor, etc., may be appointed by the Bishop.

Coadjutor: a bishop specifically elected by the diocesan council to become bishop of that diocese in the event of the retirement or resignation of the diocesan bishop.

Curate: The assisting clergyman in a parish - usually one who has been newly ordained. Presbyters who remain in assisting positions for long periods of time are generally advanced from the position of Curate to that of Associate Rector or Assistant Rector.

Diocesan Council: the body of lay and clerical delegates of a diocese meeting to conduct the business of the diocese.

Diocese: a geographical area in which churches are organized under a bishop and Standing Committee.

Ecclesiastical Authority: The agent or agency bearing responsibility for the administration, government, and direction of the life and work of a diocese, as prescribed by its canons. The Bishop and Standing Committee usually constitute the Ecclesiastical Authority of any diocese.

House: the diocesan council in session.

Lay Reader: a competent un-ordained male, of at least 18 years of age, who is licensed by the Ordinary or Standing Committee to read part of the Book of Common Prayer in public services.

Minister-in-Charge: a deacon called by a parish to be its Clergyman and subsequently appointed by the Ordinary to serve in that capacity in anticipation of ordination to the presbyterate.

Ordinary: the term used to identify the Bishop of a diocese or the Standing Committee when the episcopate is vacant.

Postulant: otherwise known as a Candidate for Holy Orders, formerly referred to as a Candidate for the Ministry.

Rector: a presbyter, called by a vestry, serving as the pastor of a local parish. Other clergy who minister in a parish are on the staff of the rector.

Suffragan: a bishop elected by a diocesan council to assist the bishop of a diocese.

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suffragan differs from a bishop-coadjutor in that a bishop-coadjutor is elected to succeed the bishop of a diocese (the Ordinary) upon his retirement or death. A suffragan bishop may succeed the diocesan bishop upon election by the diocesan council.

Synod: a deliberative and or legislative ecclesiastical assembly, at times composed of clergy and laity, but often comprised only of bishops and other clergy.

Vicar: the deacon or presbyter in charge of a mission parish or congregation financially dependent upon the diocese. The bishop of a diocese is technically the rector of all missions and mission parishes. The vicar is the resident clergyman at a mission or mission parish as the representative for the bishop.

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